



## **Policy for Looked After Children (LAC)**

### **Who are Looked After Children?**

Children and young people become 'Looked After' either if they have been taken into Care by the local authority, either via a legal route under The Children's Act 1989 or where a voluntary agreement has been reached with the birth family. Most LAC will be living in foster homes but a smaller number may be in a children's home or living with a relative or be placed back at home with their birth family.

### **Who are Previously Looked After Children?**

Previously looked-after children are those who are no longer looked after by a local authority because they are the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order.

The School believes that in partnership with Derby City Council as Corporate

Parents we have a special duty to safeguard and promote the education of looked after and previously looked after children.

### **Rationale**

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, LAC are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Nationally, LAC significantly underachieve and are at greater risk of exclusion compared with their peers. Their academic and social progress is likely to be affected by their experiences, and compounded by instability in their personal circumstances. Supporting LAC succeed and providing a better future for them is a key priority in our school.

Shelton Infant School recognises that LAC can experience specific and significant disadvantage within a school setting, and is committed to ensuring that they reach their potential in all areas. We are aware that LAC may have specific difficulties re attendance, doing homework, getting parental consent for activities, obtaining funding for extra activities, obtaining uniform, as well as stigma about their circumstances.

Shelton Infant School recognises that LAC may have very specific needs and may be coping with trauma, abuse or rejection, and are likely to experience personal distress and uncertainty.

## **Aims**

- To provide a safe and secure environment, where education is valued and there is a belief in the abilities and potential of all children.
- To support our looked after and previously looked after children and give them access to every opportunity to achieve to their potential and enjoy learning.
- To fulfil our schools' role as corporate parents to promote and support the education of our looked after and previously looked after children.

## **In pursuit of this policy we will**

- Nominate a Designated Teacher who will act as their advocate and co-ordinate support for them.
- Nominate a school governor to ensure that the needs of looked after and previously looked after children in the school are taken into account and to support the Designated Teacher.
- Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure that they adequately address the needs of looked after and previously looked after children and that those children have access to all aspects of education, particularly with regard to the curriculum, extra support and extra-curricular activities (where applicable).
- Ensure our Designated Teacher attends all PEP Meetings to ensure coherence, efficiency and continuity in planning and achieving targets.

Name of Designated Teacher – Charlotte Brierley

## **The Designated teacher will:**

- Be an advocate for any looked after and previously looked after children in the school.
- Ensure that there is a Personal Education Plan for each Looked After Child to include appropriate SMART targets and relevant information. This must be compatible with the child's Care Plan and where applicable include any other school plan, e.g. Education, Health & Care Plan and Transition Plan. The Designated Teacher will ensure that a PEP is completed for each Looked After Child when required and will ensure it is completed in advance of Care Plan Reviews.
- Ensure that someone attends Childrens' Services Reviews on each child and always prepares a written report which promotes the continuity and stability of their education.
- Liaise with the Virtual School with regard to the performance, attendance and attainment of Looked After Children.

- Provide the Virtual School with regular updates on attainment and progress enabling the Virtual School Headteacher to have clear tracking data for all Looked After Children
- Ensure that if/when the child transfers school all relevant information is forwarded to the receiving school as a matter of priority.
- Ensure that systems are in place to identify and prioritise when looked after or previously looked after children are underachieving and have early interventions to improve this in line with existing school policy
- Ensure that systems are in place to keep staff up to date and informed about looked after or previously looked after children where and when appropriate.
- Ensure that looked after or previously looked after children are listened to and have equal opportunity to pastoral support in school.
- Ensure that they keep the school up to date with current legislation and its implication for the school in respect of looked after or previously looked after children.
- Report to the Board of Governors annually on the academic performance, attendance and exclusions of the looked after or previously looked after children who are on the roll of the school.
- Ensure that the school evaluates the performance data for all looked after or previously looked after children

It is important to note that all staff and governors have a responsibility for the educational achievement and well-being of looked after children and previously looked after children. The work of the Designated Teacher is to lead in this area, but they do not hold sole responsibility.

### **All staff will:**

- Have an understanding of the key issues which can affect the learning of looked after children and previously looked after children
- Have high aspirations and celebrate the educational and personal achievement of looked after or previously looked after children;
- Be familiar with the Guidance on looked after or previously looked after children and respond appropriately to requests for information to support the completion of PEPs and other documentation needed as part of review meetings
- Liaise with the Designated Teacher where a looked after or previously looked after children is experiencing difficulty. These may be academic, pastoral, behaviour and/or attendance issues
- Recognise the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents and carers
- Respond promptly to the Designated Teacher's request for information
- Work together to promote the self-esteem of all looked after children and previously looked after children.

**All governors will:**

- Be aware of the legal requirements and Guidance for looked after or previously looked after children;
- Ensure that there is a named Designated Teacher for looked after or previously looked after children;
- Nominate a governor who links with the Designated Teacher, and provides feedback to the Board of Governors
- For child protection and confidentiality reasons, ensure that information will be collected and reported in ways that preserve the anonymity, and respect the confidentiality of the pupils concerned.
- Review the effective implementation of this policy at least every three years.
- Support the Local Authority in its statutory duty to promote the educational achievement of looked after or previously looked after children

Name of Designated Governor: Gill Hall

**The Designated Governor will:**

- Attend any specific courses relating to LAC
- Provide the requisite level of support and challenge to the school regarding policy and practice in relation to looked after children and previously looked after children
- Ensure that the Designated Teacher has the opportunity to acquire and keep up-to-date the necessary skills, knowledge and training to understand and respond to the teaching and learning needs of looked after children and previously looked after children
- Ensure an annual report is brought to the Board of Governors regarding the progress and achievement of looked after children and previously looked after children and that the Board of Governors follows up on any issues that the report raises
- Review the effectiveness of this Policy and practice in meeting the needs of looked after children and previously looked after children.